



Barbagia (Sardinia)

Directed by: Francesco Adolini
Produced by: SD Cinematografica
Duration: 28 Min.
Versions: 
Format: HD

There is a Sardinian saying that reads as follows: "feel how beautiful the breath of the wind, the rustling of leaves between the branches of the trees and the singing of birds; but without the sound of "tonara cowbells" this Sardinia of ours would not be so beautiful." In the heart of Sardinia, in the barbagia mountains, in a wild and primitive territory lives a shepherd, Gigi Sanna, frontman of the musical band Istentales, an ethno-pop formation born in the mid-90s, with a great following and boasting collaborations with artists such as Nomadi, Francesco Guccini, Tullio De Piscopo and others. The name Istentales comes from a star in the constellation Orion that since ancient times was used by peasants as a reference point for sowing and harvesting, and by shepherds to conduct flocks. Here in Barbagia the agropastoral culture and traditions of Sardinian identity translate into sounds and music not only through the songs of the Istentales. Another musician, Gianni Atzori invented an instrument, the erbekofono, made of cowbells, played with a sheep bone, whose name can be translated into "sound of the sheep". He, drummer, son of shepherds turned the bond with his land into music: "I was used to the sound of cowbells, it was all inside me, I just had to make it." The pure sound of cowbells transports us directly between the pastures and listening to it with closed eyes you can almost feel the breeze of the fields touching our skin. When the "fannu treulu" flocks pass, they make a fuss. In these pastures, however, this tinkle is granted, like an orchestra, according to the characteristics of the valley, the mountain and the territory where sheep from one sheepfold usually graze rather than another. Even, cowbells have different shades depending on the temperament and singularities of each sheep, so that its shepherd can recognize its movements and behavior even just by listening to the symphony composed by his flock. To tune these cowbells, these "sonaggios and pittiolos" is Marco Floris, a blacksmith who in his workshop in Tonara, makes from the cold bronze bells that return to those who listen to her the warmth of the mother land. And tuning happens in a singular way. Each breeder, musical expert of his flock, stands outside Marco's workshop and with his ear outstretched tells him if the shade is the right one, so Marco widens or tightens the volume of the sound vase to find the unique and inimitable sound of each sheep, unique and inimitable as any living being.



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